



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Luke 12: 32-48.

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. "Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." Then Peter said, "Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?" And the Lord replied, "Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, the master will put the servant in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish the servant severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful. That servant who knew his master's will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more."

Luke 12: 32-48

Introductory Prayer:

Father, I believe in you with all my heart. I trust in your infinite goodness and mercy.

Thank you for so patiently guiding me along the pathway to everlasting life. I love you and offer all that I have and all that I do to you, for your glory and the salvation of souls.

Petition:

Lord Jesus, keep me vigilant and committed in doing your most holy will.

1. Occupations and Preoccupations:

We are often so preoccupied and anxious about the things of this world that we forget about pursuing the treasure of the next, "an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy." In working so hard, we fall into another trap of pursuing every little entertainment and escapism to compensate such dedication. All the while, we easily forget about our real purpose and the real relationship we ought to be fostering each day with God our Father who loves us and "is pleased to give you the kingdom." What are the best excuses I use that prevent me from having a deeper committed relationship with God? Do I give as much dedication, money and time to loving God and serving my neighbor as I do to pursuing entertainments?

2. Pleased to Give You the Kingdom:

Am I convinced God is truly "pleased to give you the kingdom," that he loves me and is interested in me? Why don't I always want what God wants for me? What things and activities in my life are emptying me and distracting me from developing a better relationship with Christ? In order to maintain a healthy spiritual life, we must often reassess our attitudes and change our priorities so as to safeguard our hearts from being swindled and robbed of our true treasure, which is God. Do my priorities and decisions reflect to those around me that Christ is the true love of my heart, my true treasure?

3. The Devil's Strategy Revealed:

Once upon a time, Satan called an end-of-the-fiscal-year meeting to go over the year's results. He was not pleased, and he demanded to know what new strategies he could employ to guarantee success in moving men's hearts away from their Creator. Sending men distractions in prayer and contemplation came just ahead of tempting men to greed and lust. Infiltrating and corrupting the music industry increased the numbers. Developing the multibillion-dollar pornography industry brought in great results. Yet, Satan was still not satisfied. Then one suggestion was brought to his attention: "We must convince the men of earth that they have a lot of time!" We all tend to think we will continue in this earthly life for many years to come. This may not be the case, for we know not the day or the hour. We must awake from our slumber, for "blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival."

Conversation with Christ:

Lord, strengthen me in times of temptation and distraction, so I may never sell my inheritance for a bowl of lentils (see Genesis 25:34). Help me, Lord, to rededicate my life to you in a more committed way that builds your kingdom in me and in those around me.

Resolution:

I will do a good examination of conscience to see what more I can do to keep Christ and his interests at the top of my priorities and in the allocation of my time.